

Spirit Caller

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Spirit Caller Magazine

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Tha Mothafukin' Conten'z, Yo!

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This document has been tagged as non-family safe and might not be appropriate for all audiences.



Jessica Robins-Eads

Family

Mother cannibalized
the old computer.
Took the tower
off. Pulled guts
out. Stern-faced, mouth pulled tight,
her dancing disembodied hands
rearranged organs—manner reminiscent of
Shelley.
Creative amalgamation.
Post-death derivative.
Imp _erfect effect.
It works—but whines unnaturally
when in use.

Jordon Thomas Marx



Two Trout

Betty sat reading the paper, her cigarette burning in the ashtray. She smoked too much but couldn't find the will-power to stop. It didn't help that her two sons and daughter smoked as well; there were always plenty of ashtrays around and a brown nicotine film coated the walls and ceiling of every room.

John, the eldest son, had just returned from a night's fishing.

"A good couple of trout, maw," he shouted from the hallway. Betty didn't move but waited for him to come in. He fiddled about with the rod and other gear on the hallway floor.

"A good couple of trout, maw!"

"Aye, good, son," she said, raising her voice so's he would hear.

He let out a sigh and took the fish from the bag. They were wrapped in newspaper. John liked the idea of wrapping the fish like that, even though most poachers didn't do it that way. It reminded him of the fish and chip shop and that made him feel satisfied.

His head poked round the living room door.

"I'm just going to gut these."

"Right you are."

Betty glanced up from her newspaper in time to see his head vanish behind the door. It was good that he had caught a couple, in a way it compensated for the cold, damp weather and the pain it was giving her in her hip.

John chopped the head and tail off the fish. It wasn't a bad size. He cut along the underbelly, folded it open and scraped out the inedible bits. It smelt fresh. He loved the smell. It wasn't like the smell of death at all. It wasn't even the kind of smell he found in the fishmongers. The smell of gutting fish he had caught himself was far healthier.

After doing the second one he washed his hands and went through to the living room.

"You might've taken your jacket off before doing those," she said.

"Ach, I like to get them done right away. They'll be great grilled." He looked over at his mother, "Gina can do them when she gets in."

"You shouldn't depend on her to cook for you."

The TV was on without the sound up. John looked at it in a disinterested way while rolling a smoke.

"The police nearly got us last night."

There was a wee smile on his lips. It was true though and it worried Betty. Not that she thought the fishing should be illegal but she didn't want her boy to end up in the court. She puffed on her cigarette.

"Well nearly's alright, son, but just you make sure you keep a good eye out."

"I do, maw."

John lit his smoke and leant over to get an ashtray from the coffee table.

"After this I'll go for a kip."

Betty put her paper down.

“Would you make us some tea before you go?”

“Awright, but where’s Andy?”

He knew fine where Andy would be.

“Still in his bed,” she said.

That was exactly the answer he’d expected.

John could have forced Andy to make the tea if the lazy bastard had been up and about. All the same he went through and made a pot. While waiting for it to brew he looked in the fridge at the trout. Beauties. He heard Andy coming down the stairs and going into the bathroom.

“Alright, Maw, here’s your tea,” said John.

He set the tray down on the coffee table and sat back in his place. That was as much as he was doing; his mother would have to pour and do the palaver with the milk and sugar.

“It looks good and strong,” she said.

John smiled.

There was the sound of footsteps going upstairs. John stopped smiling and sipped his tea. Andy was away back to his bed.

Despite the cold and damp of the bedroom Andy slept wearing only underpants. They hung baggily on his tall, thin frame as though he’d stretched them permanently with moving about too much. He crawled under the covers curling his body into a ball to keep warm. The clock had stopped at 3-28. He closed his eyes keeping the image of the clock face in his mind. The sound of the clock not ticking fascinated him. If he could keep the image of the clock face in his head and imagine it had never ticked, it was possible to freeze time. Freeze time. That abundance! Naw naw. Shite. The bastard time that had caused his father to die.

“Will you take the tray through?” Betty said.

Her eyes were tired and John wondered if she’d had any sleep. He didn’t like the way she slept in the living room now. He didn’t like her tiredness.

“I’m away to bed,” he said, lifting the tray.

It was a bit awkward trying to open the kitchen door with a tray in his hands. He couldn’t remember having closed it. It must’ve been Andy when he was at the toilet; it was a miracle him being out of bed at all before nine o’clock.

John put the cups in the sink and ran some cold water on them.

His father used to do that after they’d had supper. He remembered when he was twelve, when his father had brought him home a fishing rod. They’d had a special supper then his father went through to the kitchen to do the washing up. The rod had been a late birthday present, something he’d been wanting for ages.

Again he looked in the fridge at the trout then went up to the bedroom.

Andy breathed heavily, the sound of his breathing occupying the entire room. John sat on his own

bed and started to undress, slowly at first then quicker as the cold began to penetrate.

“Andy, are you sleeping?”

“No, but I’d like to be.”

“Uch, talk to me, you lazy shite.”

Andy rolled over onto his back, stretched his legs straight out and raised his head up, clasping his hands behind it.

“Did you catch anything?”

“Two trout, they’re in the fridge.”

“Not bad.”

There was a silence.

Andy stared at the ceiling. John stared at Andy then closed his eyes.

“Do you not think Maw’s looking rough?”

“I don’t know, I haven’t seen her this morning,” said Andy, irritated by the question.

“Don’t you think you should have seen her!”

“Not really, no.”

“Christ’s sake!”

John turned over and looked at the wall. There was a brown patch where he regularly blew smoke. It was something to look at. He thought of the money it had cost to buy his way out the army. Eight months service. At least he’d got through the basic training. His father had never wanted him to join anyway. That money would have been handy now. Now that maw wasn’t getting any better either.

Andy was still looking at the ceiling, the sarcastic tone of his brother’s “Christ’s sake” niggling away in his head.

“What do you mean Christ’s sake? That’s no use just saying Christ’s sake and leaving it there. I don’t have to get out of bed or go down and see Maw if I don’t want to.”

John rolled over to face him.

“Look, I’d have thought you would want to look after her... I mean... Considering what happened with da and that.”

“What would you know about it? You weren’t even here. You were away in the stupid bloody army.”

Andy was sitting up now ready for his brother’s reaction.

“Look,” John said calmly, “there’s no need to bring the army into this. I don’t want to argue.”

“Why not? They poisoned you in there. Aw their daft propaganda.”

“Propaganda is it, eh? I bet you don’t even know what propaganda means.”

“Aye, I do,” said Andy.

“Good, I’m going to sleep.”

John turned over to look at the brown patch on the wall: he turned back over and got out of bed to roll a smoke.

“I thought you were going to sleep, Monty.”

“Aw, Christ,” said John loudly.

He hated being called Monty. He had nothing to do with General Montgomery. That was history. Hadn’t served in the Desert Rats or any regiment remotely like that.

The room was cold and tense and John didn’t like it. He was tempted to jump on his brother and punch his face in. The skinny shite that he was. John lit his smoke.

“Thank Christ Gina’s got a job.”

“Aye, well, she’s a lassie,” Andy said.

“I know she’s a lassie. She’s our sister.. ..Ach, what’s the point?”

John paced back and forward flicking his ash on the carpet. It might’ve been better if he’d stayed in the army. It was funny sharing a room with just the one person. Especially when that person was his brother and was always in there.

“Watch what you’re doing with that ash.”

“Aye, right.”

John continued pacing.

Andy sat up on the edge of his bed.

“Do you know what your problem is? You feel guilty,” said Andy.

Guilty was right. Right! John hated how his wee brother could know a thing like that. He stopped pacing.

Andy had this knowing look on his face but each of his fists sat clenched on his knees. Like he was ready for action. Ready for action. That was the kind of army shite John wanted nothing to do with now, but whatever happened he knew he was quicker than his brother. Faster and stronger than Andy, the skinny bastard that he was.

“On you go then, carry on,” said John.

“You feel guilty cause you used all the insurance money left over from da’s funeral to buy your bloody way out the army. And not just that, but if you’d been here we might’ve been able to get him to hospital quicker and save his life. He could’ve been saved.”

“That’s not my fault. That’s not the fucking point,” John said.

He smashed his fist into Andy’s face. There was an incredible crunch. The sound of the punch echoed round the room. Blood spewed from Andy’s nose. Andy wrestled John to the floor. Blood dripped from Andy’s nose onto his brother’s cheek. Andy took hold of a shirt and wiped the blood from his brother’s face; put the shirt against his own nose and stood up. John waited on the floor watching as Andy put his feet into shoes, pulled on an old pair of baggy trousers and left the room.

Andy opened the fridge door and took hold of the trout. He opened the bin. Saw the fish heads in there. His eye caught the eye of one of the dead fish. It made him want to throw up. Grasping the trout he went outside for some fresh air.

There was a bitter wind and the rain had come on, but Andy stood bare-chested at the end of the path, waiting for next-door’s cat.

Jim Ferguson

Tree soil

gone soft death
evaporate
muy dolorosa
sun coughed fire
Unjaded
like doom
and its alright
wishing you were
bored only omened
skeletal sleep
So deep
who turns away
i stoned to complain

Jon Watson



Dear Diary

There are times
I feel like the scum of the earth
Sometimes lower than pond scum
Or soap scum
Of the bacteria that sits in the kitchen sink
Or maybe I am cancer
Or detritus
Or feces of a gnat
Or a giant elephant
In a zoo swimming in his own stew

Yet if all this were true
Then that would be pretty impressive
The lowest rung in the chain of being
Or the fucker that brings down the hierarchy
Making everyday twelfth night or mardi gras
And even the gods have to hand it to me
Because I'm so lowly, so minute
So beyond comprehension
That even a q continuum couldn't fathom me
Then again....it could be something I ate
Either way, in all honesty, everything's great

And fuck you and the horse you rode in on
....which is a horse with no name
Which is a really cool song
By America....which is a band founded in England
But came here to escape persecution from
The Beatles. True story
I looked it up on Wikipedia.
Goodnight, diary.

Andy Hall









F. Stop Marvin

The Day the Music Died

It didn't really die that day. It happened at night and it didn't really die. No, just the heavy fog of apathy, disinterest and incredulity settled in for a long stay. My friends and acquaintances continued their merry way, enjoying the punk bands from overseas while I grew bored with the whole noise without meaning trip. Nobody even tried to bum-rush the door. Sure, plenty of knuckle-heads leapt to their evening doom from the towering stacks, but I recognized those buzz-headed goons for what they were, jocks out for a night of mayhem. If not the floor to catch them under the chin, a warm thigh to crack in half or a skinny "faggot" or "spic" to charge and hospitalize. Libert   , Egalit   , Fraternit   ? Non, avarice et aggression solos.

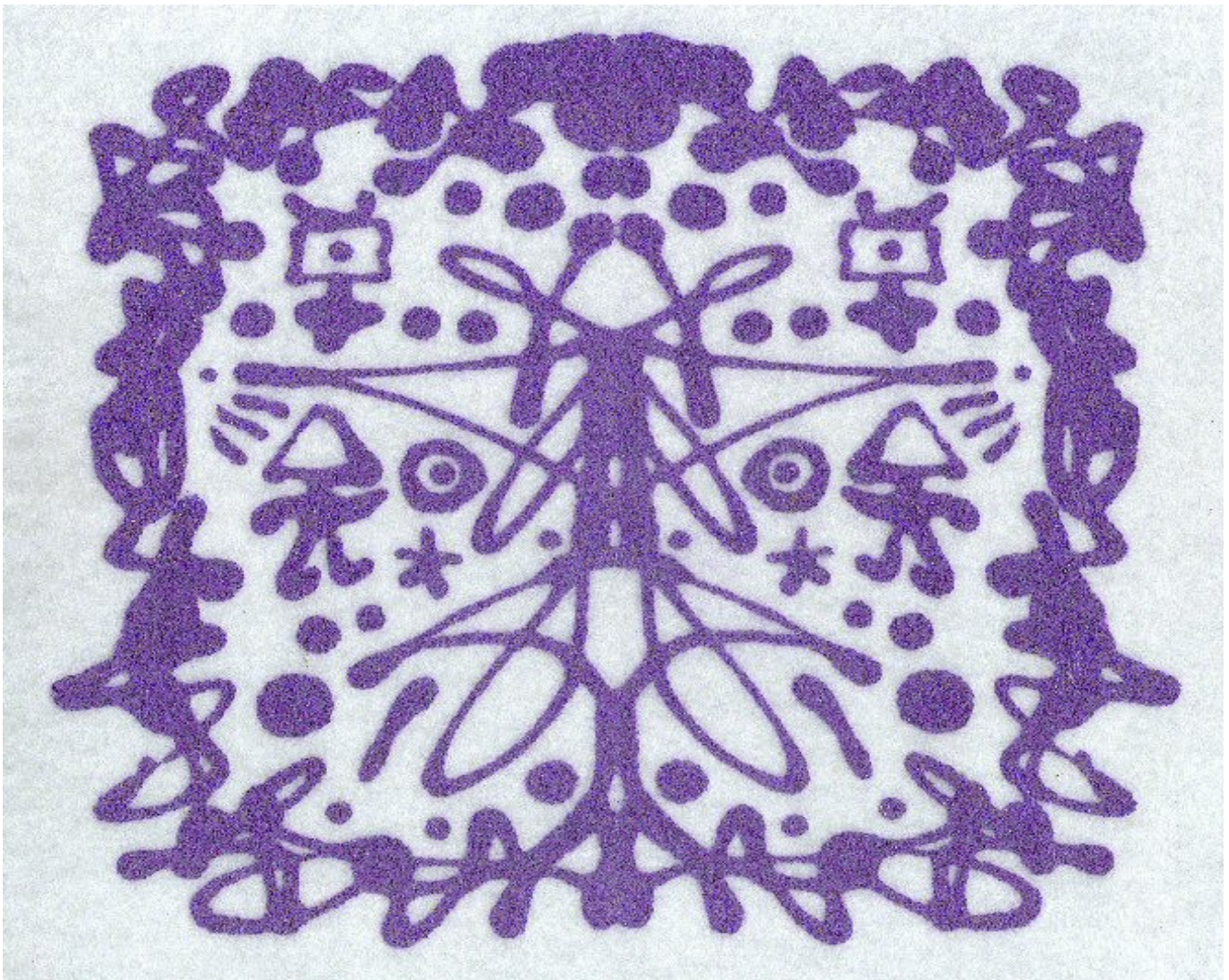
I slunk to the back of the auditorium and encountered another burned soul. He was fed up with it and said as much. I agreed with him and we smiled, bound in mutual disgust with the scene. He stated his plan for the night was mere intoxication and his efforts were hampered by the shortage of intoxicants after the security boys confiscated his flask of liquor. I wasn't even drinking and the sobriety made it all so much more drab and dim a prospect to stand in silence, bathed in noise, noise, noise.

I reached in my pocket and felt fireworks. Small fireworks, known as camellia flowers. Those little, round coils of paper and fuse and powder, meant to spin and dance with a shower of sparks upon the ground. I had the amusement and my friend had the flame. Together we lit one and watched it fulfill it's life's purpose in a blaze of glory. Too, so it was gone to ash and ruin. We lit another with glee. Something, at last, with a whiff of danger to excite the nerves! We lit still another and while it smoked up the aisle I noticed the hand of god descending from heaven. A bouncer had my shoulder in a steel trap grip and I said, "I give up. I am not resisting. I will go quietly.", though I had to shout it. I heard my fellow traveler cursing and turned to see two giants had him in their grasp. He cursed them, referring to various anatomical impossibilities and questioned their heritage in most vulgar terms. I laughed and walked along with my captor. I went out the door, meek as a lamb, while my pal was flung out.

We laughed and agreed that the guards had done us quite the favor by

extracting us from the trap
of our own disillusionment. Without the distraction of attempting to
make sense of the senseless we set
about in the search for intoxicants. Pounding drums stand no match
against the pounding of blood upon
the inner ear in the throes of heaving bile out your nose. As any good
bum knows, it means fuck all when
you have booze. The bombs can fall with the rain and roaches and rats
will hump just the same.

Stark R.M.



Habit

my last Cuban
burns tonight. a premium
lighter wraps its tendrils
around my new
appendage.

tightly wrapped,

humid. moist. hot to the touch.

but not too much so,
the flavor heady, gives
a pleasant odor when

smoked.

the draw is good,
inhalation smooth
and my emotion
lights itself again.

She's a woman,
beautiful and rare
She's a woman,
illegal in her taste

irresistible in texture,
transformative,

She takes, and I give,
She gives, and I take.

no matter how rough
i am, she never unwraps
herself, she stays
concealed, and i beg
for her charms. i taste,
Her beauty rare.

made ever more so
by social-more
by law, by custom, by creed
but I consume Her
anyway. She was made
to be desired,
by me.

--

some habits make
great metaphors.
a glass of wine.
a pint of microbrew.
acquired taste.

its the bitterness of a new
and foreign experience,
coupled with the sweetness
of persistence. Metaphor.

this is revolution. and smells
bittersweet. the ash
burning in my ashtray, the change
we need but fear.

something churns
in my gut,
like the summer sun burning
away the clouds
of a dew strewn
morning. I am
mourning.

the ash, it drips
heavy with meaning, like the meat
off the bone of a meal
long past.

its taste was an acquired one.
it was mine, and imperfect,
but real.

and when I part with what chafes
my collared neck,
it will be
with the bittersweetness
that meets the lips
of a teen's first beer.
a young man's first cigar.
a twenty something's glass
of expensive wine.

and when that change
comes.

it will be as bittersweet.

tonight, She is long enough,
hot enough
robust enough
strong enough
to wipe away
that which eats,
and the demons scratching
at the cracks in my being
subside.

so of all the dreams
and spirits that burn tonight.
my last Cuban
burns the brightest.

Jordon Thomas Marx



No Submission Today

I haven't been doing much poetry lately.
Too risky w/ my driving record and I actually get
tired of listening to and dealing with other 'poets'.
Their interests and egos have little to do with
my own here. I always considered
myself more historian than "poet"
as I understand the term in the loosest sense.
The stage is also a true poet's worst enemy, I think.
Reading a bit - Water For Elephants was quite good
and eerily NY/circus familiar in a way.
The circus gets raided - prohibition - and
sent packing in my home town, Poughkeepsie.
Performers were called "Kinkers" by
workers in the traveling circus.
I am more worker than kinker in the poetry circus, I think...

R.J. Lotze



“Guess Who?”

Carol Powell

If ever he was to be heard

some say we remember him
only
because he spoke well

because we have forgotten
as we so often do
that

even after he had been beaten and
jailed by corrupted police

even while he was under FBI surveillance
having his phone tapped and his mail opened

he spoke for people
who had gone unheard

yes
he spoke well
for an assembly who had struggled
to articulate their story

even if it was as simple as
the fabled American Dream

he spoke of things
which had gone unsaid

yes
he spoke well
to an audience who had no idea
of the world outside their polite society

even as the war grew in their backyards
and began to swallow their children

he spoke truth
to a power structure
which had been designed to silence him

yes
he spoke well
because
he had to

Marvin Scott Marvin

And God said...

You have to admit
Every living thing
Is an invasive species
Conjured out of thin air
And carries with it the
Formula for joy and despair
With no reason included
We are all little utopias
and dystopias surrounded
yet secluded this cosmos fits
on the tip of a pen an infinite
Magnification within, dream lit
In the vast stillness, there we dance

Andy Hall



“Wired Skull”

Jessica Robins-Eads



"Speaking in Tongues"

Carol Powell

The Kingdom of God

Is like an orchestra
And god is the conductor
And the winds and the strings
And you're the percussion
And if you don't keep in rhythm
You will be thrown into the lake of fire

The kingdom

Is like little red riding hood
And god is grandma and you're the naughty girl
And god is also really the wolf
And is going to eat you
And your remains will be thrown
Into the lake of fire.

The kingdom is like
A porno and god is the dominos delivery boy
And if you don't leave a good tip
The good lord will spit on your pizza
And throw you into the lake of fire

The kingdom is like
A penis flying through the air
And it is the greatest penis, the golden penis
Look but don't touch because if you do
It will kill you
And you will be thrown into
The lake of fire

The kingdom is like
A lake of fire

And you must walk in The Lord
And if you can't walk, then swim
And if you can't swim, then drown
Lest you be thrown into the lake oferrrrrr....fire?

Andy Hall



Stable

A horse got hawked,
The jewel got plucked,
Getting high with the black sheep
Spinning Tedeski and Trucks.
Up down in a basement,
My focused mind is made to wake up,
The sour seeds of our energies
Volcanic pressures erupt.

What one wins and what one loses
One's lot cast pot luck,
The ticks in the hours
Are bound to build up.

Standing on stools,
True Light as the Cup-
When writing the rules
The Sun as High Judge.

Crazy like a shining diamond,
Skating 'round thin air and ice,
Rushing into the 3rd World
And then to nourish the secret spice.

If there ever was an Eldorado,
It's about time time is about tomorrow-
When a reed has arisen
There is no need to beg, steal, or borrow!

I don't apply to the government
I'm under the lion's foot table
And where I was born King

Is a stone place so stable.
To free the resident masonry
These words are thoroughly hammered,
From one cornered stone to another-
Spirit came before matter.

R.J. Lotze



Box of Moonlight

there will be times
when the days are so
dark
we can not see
anything clearly

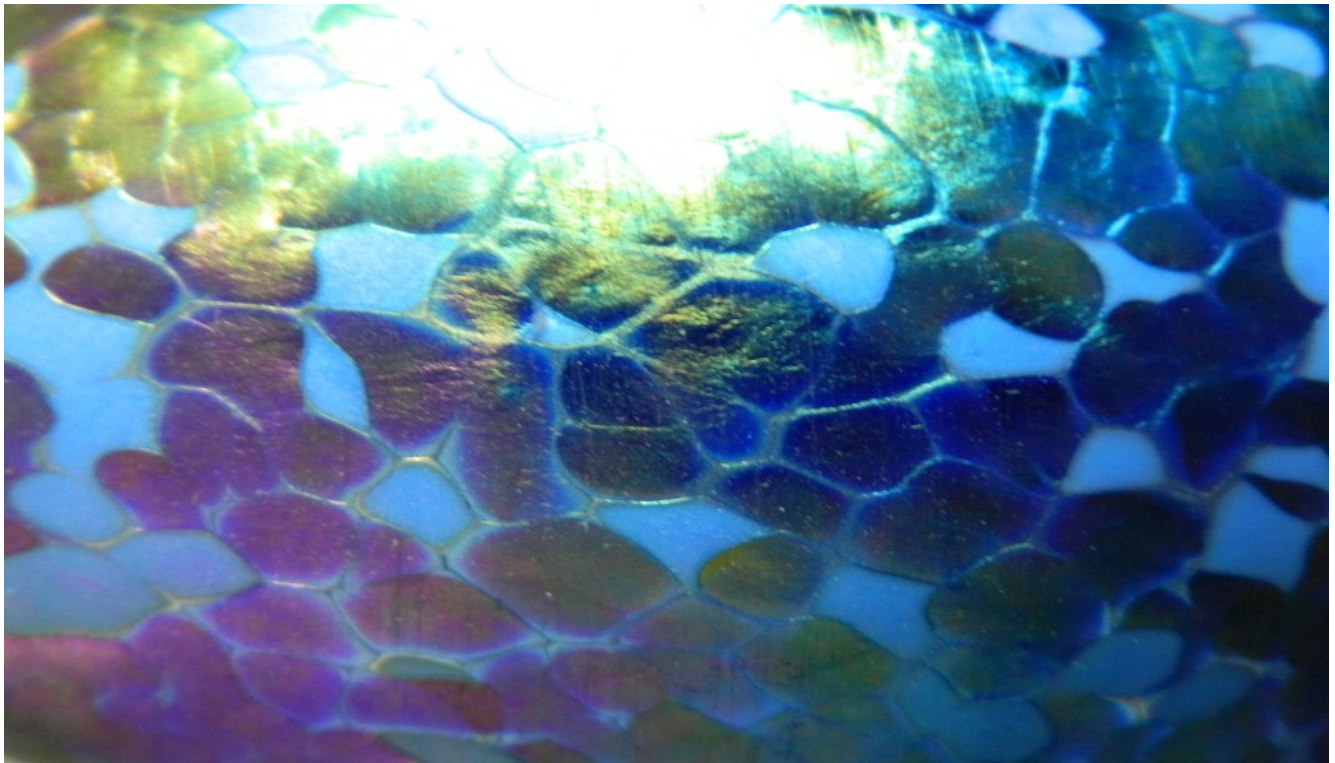
when
the world looks
like a dirty mirror
with everything
moving backwards

it is those times
when
all we really need is
a box of moonlight

to open up
and
brighten up

to guide us
home.

Marvin Scott Marvin



African Morning

The attack of the poets,
Warning: Don't drop the soap!
When using the donkey train for coal
That bent over freedom is a sad joke.

Don't the rich like the filthy, dirty places?
Pay! for every breath in the end.
No oxygen in the air no more-
No bullshit to defend.

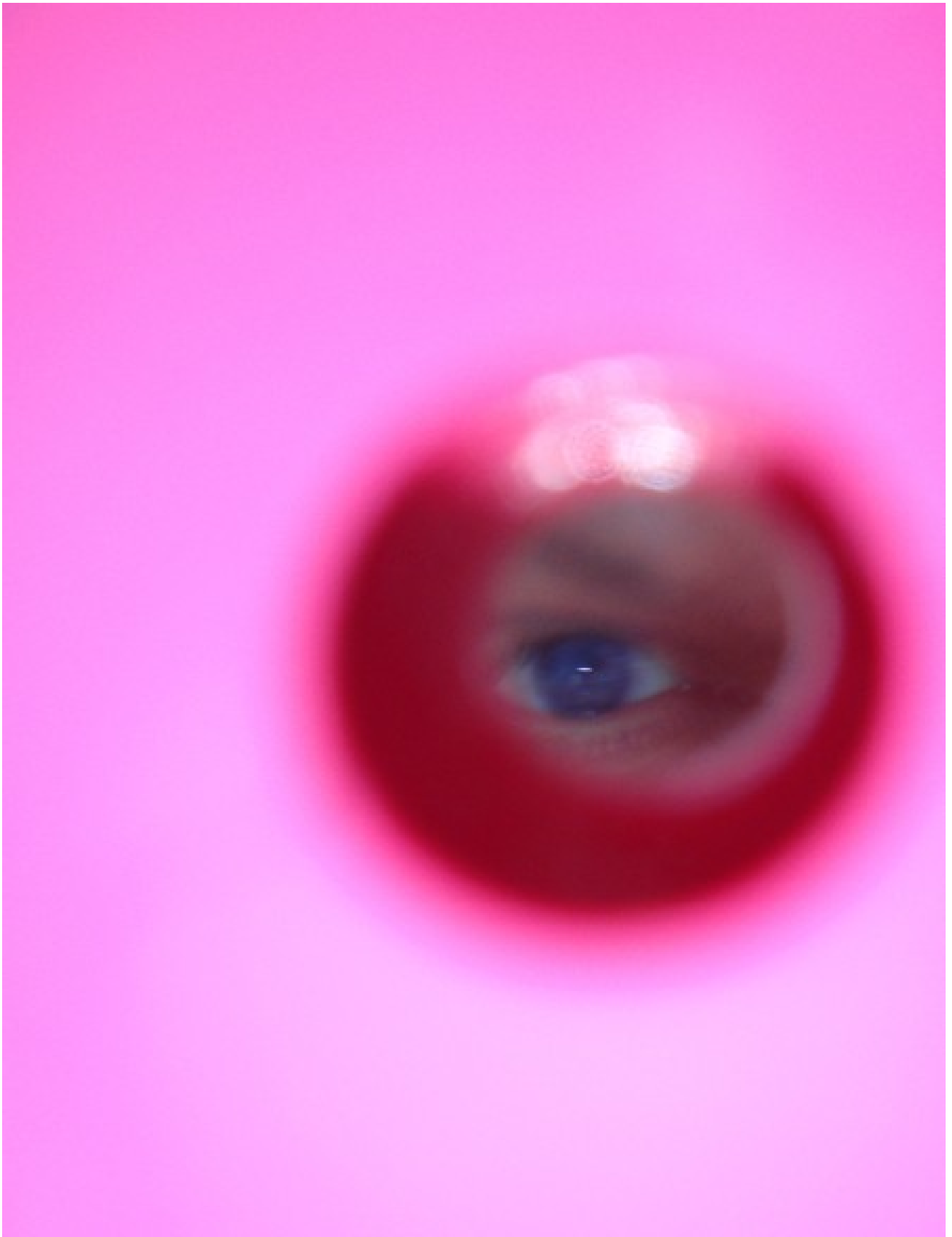
I'll tell you a Romantic story
About the Christian Church and a Love and a crop
The blood ran red as roses
When it touched the earth at the base of that Cross.

There is no hierarchy
Higher than the dirt-
Whether I-talian, or Israeli, or I-ranian
We all begin at birth.

Yet wounded in the Evermore battle-
Draw back the now as curved Zen
Sharpened tones at the tip let go the taut string
With Earth in harmony, Goddess and friend.

The re-evolution will devour nations
And as sure as the hard Sun will rise-
When on that African morning
Love is realized.

R.J. Lotze



As I drive my 30-year-old car to a smog test

waiting on the red light
at First and Harbor when
a one-armed man steps off
the curb into traffic
to sell flowers
as across the street
an elderly gentleman
pushes the sum total
of his alleged net worth
in a shopping cart
at this distance it is easy
to mistake the white checks
on his blue sleeping bag
for the stars
on the American flag
while farther down
the street balloons dance
in the breeze
bouncing on a tether
to advertise
new automobiles
for sale
all I can do is wait
to be given a green light
and
keep moving forward.

Marvin Scott Marvin



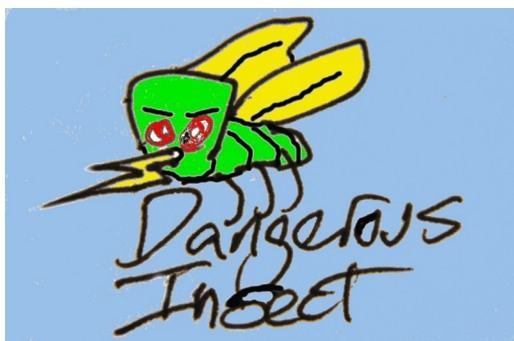
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